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THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

ON MY FRIENDLY CRITICS¹

NOW that for some years my body has not been visible in the places it used to haunt (my mind, even then, being often elsewhere), my friends in America have fallen into the habit of thinking of me as dead, and with characteristic haste and kindness, they are writing obituary notices, as it were, on my life and works. Some of these reach me in this other world—the friendly ones, which their authors send me; and without the aid of any such stratagem as Swift's, I have the strange pleasure of laughing at my own epitaphs. It is not merely the play of vanity that enters into this experience, nor the occasional excuse for being unfair in return: there comes with it a genuine discovery of the general balance of one's character. A man has unrivalled knowledge of the details of his life and feelings, but it is hard for him to compose his personage as it appears in the comedy of the world, or in the eyes of other people. It is not true that contemporaries misjudge a man. Competent contemporaries judge him perfectly, much better than posterity, which is composed of critics no less egotistical and obliged to rely exclusively on documents easily misinterpreted. The contemporary can read more safely between the lines; and if the general public often misjudges the men of its own time, the general public hears little of them. It is guided by some party tag or casual association, by the malignity or delusion of some small coterie that has caught its ear: how otherwise should it judge ideas it has not grasped and people it has not seen? But public opinion is hardly better informed about the past than about the present, and histories are only newspapers published long after the fact.

As to my person, my critics are very gentle and I am sensible of the kindness, or the diffidence, with which they treat me. I do not mind being occasionally denounced for atheism, conceit, or detachment. One has to be oneself: and so long as the facts are not misrepresented—and I have little to complain of on that score—any judgment based upon them is a two-edged sword: people simply condemn what condemns them. I am not in the least abashed at being called names which so easily turn into compliments: I can al-

¹ This article, much too personal and poetic in places for a scientific journal, is one of a forthcoming collection of *Soliloquies in England*. I hope the reader will understand and forgive.

ways say to myself that my atheism, like that of Spinoza, is true piety towards the universe and denies only gods fashioned by men in their own image, to be servants of their human interests; and that even in this denial I am no rude iconoclast, but full of imaginative sympathy with the impulses of idolaters. My detachment from things and persons is also affectionate, and simply what the ancients called philosophy: I consent that a flowing river should flow; I renounce that which betrays, and cling to that which satisfies, and I relish the irony of truth; but my security in my own happiness is not indifference to that of others: I share their joy in their true loves. That I am guilty of vanity, it would be folly to deny: what artist, what thinker, what parent does not over-estimate his own offspring? Can I suppress an irresistible sense of seeing things clearly, and a keen delight in so seeing them? Frankly, I think these attitudes of mine are justified by the facts; but I entirely understand how offensive they must be to anyone who thinks they are not justified, or who fears that they may be. Let the irritant work. The arrows of anger miss their mark. Aimed at some imaginary evil bird in the heavens, they scarcely startle the poet wandering in his dell. He hears them pass over his head and bury their venom far away in the young grass. Far away too his friends are designing his hollow cenotaph, and inscribing it with seemly words in large capitals.

On the other hand, in respect to my impersonal opinions, which I have always tried to express with the most scrupulous clearness, I notice a little bewilderment, and some obtuseness. Of course, if people are repelled by the subject or by the manner (which is an integral part of the thought) and find it all unintelligible, that is no fault of theirs, nor of mine: but I speak of the initiated and of such as are willing to lend their minds to my sort of lucubration. For instance, when more than twenty years ago, I wrote my *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion*, this is what William James said of it: "What a perfection of rottenness . . . how fantastic a philosophy! as if the 'world of values' were independent of existence. It is only as *being* that one thing is better than another. The idea of darkness is as good as that of light, as ideas. There is more value in light's *being*." William James was a "radical empiricist," so that for him the being of light could not have meant anything except its being in idea, in experience. The fantastic view must therefore be some other, apparently that in the realm of unrealized essences, apart from any observer, one essence can be better than another. But how could anyone attribute such a view to me? The whole contention of my book was that the glow of human emotion lent a

value to good poetry which it denied to bad, and to one idea of God which it denied to another. My position in this matter was that of empirical philosophy, and of James himself. In his book on *Pragmatism*, he says that the being of atoms is just as good as the being of God, if both produce the same effects in human experience; and I remember once mildly protesting to him on that point, and asking him if, apart from these effects on us, the existence of God, assuming God to be conscious, would not have a considerable value in itself: and he replied "Of course; but I was thinking of our *idea*." This was exactly the attitude of my book; I was thinking of our religious and poetic ideas, and reducing their value to what they stood for in the elements of our experience or in our destiny.

I think I see, however, where the trouble lies. The practical intellect conceives everything as a source of influence. Whether it be matter or other people, or tutelary spirits, that which we envisage in the first instance is not our idea of those objects but their operation on us, or our operation on them. Now a source of influence can not be non-existent. Accordingly, what concerns earnest people in their religion is something, they know not what, which is real. They are not interested in forming poetic or dramatic pictures of the gods, as the Greeks did in their mythology, but rather in finding a living God to help them as even the Greeks did in their home cultus and their oracles. This living God, since he is to operate and to be worked upon, must exist; otherwise the whole practise of religion becomes a farce. So also in love or in science, it would be egotistical and affected to gloat on our own ideal, turning our backs on the adorable person or the natural process before us. It is the defect of empirical and critical philosophy, that it turns our attention too much to the subjective: legitimately, I think, if the purpose is merely to study the growth and logic of our beliefs, but illegitimately (as I have always maintained) if the purpose is malicious, and if it is assumed that once we have understood how our beliefs are formed we shall abandon them and believe nothing. Empiricism and idealism are, as Kant called them, excellent cathartics, but they are nasty food; and if we try to build them up into a system of the universe the effort is not only self-contradictory (because we ought then to possess only ideas without beliefs) but the result is, in the words of William James, fantastic and rotten.

Now, however much I may have studied the human imagination, I have never doubted that even highly imaginative things, like poetry and religion, express real events, if not in the outer world, at least in the inner growth or discipline of life: like the daily experience of the senses and like the ideas of science (both of which are

also symbolical) they form a *human language*, all the terms of which are poetical and its images dream-images, but which symbolizes things and events beyond it and is controlled from outside. This would be perfectly evident to any other animal who should discover how men see the world or what they think of it: why should we be less intelligent than any other animal would be about ourselves? Enlightenment consists in coming nearer and nearer to the natural objects that lend a practical meaning to our mental discourse: and when the material significance of our dreams is thus discovered, we are lost in admiration at the originality, humor, and pictorial grandeur of the imagery in which our experience comes to us, as we might be at the decorative marvels of tapestry or of stained glass: but now without illusion. For we can now discriminate the rhythms and color proper to our mental atmosphere from the extrinsic value of discourse as a sign for things and events beyond it. These external things and events make up what we call nature, the reel round which our dreams are wound, the all-governing influence that controls them. It is nature, or some part of nature, or some movement of nature occurring within us or affecting us, that is the true existent object of religion, of science, and of love. The rest is a mere image.

My naturalism is sometimes taxed with being dogmatic, and if I were anxious to avoid that reproach, I might easily reduce my naturalism to a definition and say that if experience has any sources whatever, the sum and system of these sources shall be called nature: and such is the etymological meaning of the words *natura*, *φύσις*, and *genesis*—the way of birth or the breed of whatever comes into existence. I know what speculative difficulties cluster about the notion of cause, which in one sense is quite unnecessary to science: but so long as time, process, and derivation are admitted at all (and there could be no natural science or history without them) events may be traced back to earlier events which were their sources; and this universal flux of events will be called nature. Any existing minds, and any gods exercising power will evidently be parts of nature. But I am not concerned to avoid dogmatism on such a point. Every assertion about existence is hazarded, it rests on animal faith, not on logical proof; and every argument to support naturalism, or to rebut it, implies naturalism. To deny that there are any facts (if skepticism can be carried so far) is still to dogmatize, no less than it would be to point to some fact in particular: in either case we descend into the arena of existence, which may betray our confidence. Any fact, if admitted, commits us to naturalism, to an existence which discourse plays about and regards, but does not create.

It is the essence of the practical intellect to prophesy about nature, and we must all do it. As to the truth of our prophecy, that is always problematical, because nature is whatever nature happens to be; and as to our knowledge, starting as it does from a single point, the present position of the thinker, and falling away rapidly in clearness and certainty as the perspective recedes, it can not pretend to draw the outlines of nature *a priori*: yet our knowledge of nature, in our neighborhood and moral climate, is very considerable, since every known fact is a part of nature. It is quite idle to deny, for instance, that human life depends on cosmic and hygienic influences; or that in the end all human operations must run back somehow to the rotation of the earth, to the rays of the sun, to the moisture and fructification of the soil, to the ferment there of vegetative and dreaming spirits, quickened in animals endowed with locomotion into knowledge of surrounding things: whence the passionate imaginations which we find in ourselves. I know things might have been arranged otherwise: and some of those alternative worlds may be minutely thought out in myth or in philosophy, in obedience to some dialectical or moral impulse of the human mind; but that all those other worlds are figments of fancy, interesting as poetry is interesting, and that only the natural world, the world of medicine and commerce, is actual, is obvious; so obvious to every man in his sane moments that I have always thought it idle to argue the point. Argument is not persuasive to madmen; but they can be won over by gentler courses to a gradual docility to the truth. One of these gentler courses, and the one I have always taken, is this: to remember that madness is human, that dreams have their springs in the depths of human nature and of human experience; and that the illusion they cause may be kindly and even gloriously dispelled by showing what the solid truth was which they expressed allegorically. Why should one be angry with dreams, with myth, with allegory, with madness? We must not kill the mind, as some rationalists do, in trying to cure it. The life of reason, as I conceive it, is simply the dreaming mind becoming coherent, devising symbols and methods, such as languages, by which it may fitly survey its own career, and the forces of nature on which that career depends. Reason thereby raises our vegetative dream into a poetic revelation and transcript of the truth. That all this life of expression grows up in animals living in the material world, is the deliverance of reason itself, in our lucid moments; but my books, being descriptive of the imagination and having perhaps some touches of imagination in them, may not seem to have expressed my lucid moments

alone. They were, however, intended to do so; and I ought to have warned my readers more often that such was the case.

I have no metaphysics, and in that sense I am no philosopher, but a poor ignoramus trusting what he hears from the men of science. I rely on them to discover gradually exactly which elements in their description of nature may be literally true, and which merely symbolical: even if they were all symbolical, they would be true enough for me. My naturalism is not at all afraid of the latest theories of space, time, or matter: what I understand of them, I like, and am ready to believe: for I am a follower of Plato in his doctrine that only knowledge of ideas (if we call it knowledge) can be literal and exact, whilst practical knowledge is necessarily mythical in form, precisely because its object exists and is external to us. An arbitrary sign, indication, or name can point to something without at all fathoming its nature, and *therefore* can be knowledge of fact: which an esthetic or logical elucidation of ideas can never be. I am quite happy in this human ignorance mitigated by pictures, for it yields practical security and poetic beauty: what more can a sane man want? In this respect I think sometimes I am the only philosopher living: I am resigned to being a mind. I have put my hand into the hand of Nature, and a thrill of sympathy has passed from her into my very heart, so that I can instinctively see all things, and see myself, from her point of view: a sympathy which emboldens me often to say to her, "Mother, tell me a story." Not the fair Sheherazade herself knew half the marvelous tales that Nature spins in the brains of her children. But I must not let go her hand in my wonder, or I might be bewitched and lost in the maze of her inventions.

Why does a child love stories and a philosopher systems? Because they express the vitality of his dreaming mind. An illusion is such only when wrongly used to describe an alleged existence. It must always be expressive of the soul that breeds it; and if the movement of the soul thus expressed is deep and normal, the idea it evokes will be morally important, even if nothing external corresponds to it: it will be a true ideal. We all smile benevolently at the illusions of lovers, because we know the sound instinct and the sane happiness which that moment of lyric love symbolizes and forbodes, as a sacrament might synthesize a whole life of grace; and I think the perfectly similar illusions of the religious fancy would seem to us quite as innocent (as they did to the Greeks) if an insane attempt to turn religion into science had not made us quarrelsome and bitter on the subject. So the Platonic notion of an Absolute Good is vain and empty if you consider it as a discovery: such an existing object would be blank and not a good at all; but con-

sidered as an expression of a movement in the soul, it is the counterpart of our total nature reduced to harmony: it is the supreme principle of taste and morals. Applied, this principle would dictate a pervasive goodness in all things and all actions; but as these details must take form gradually, according to their occasions, we may express the common, inner fountain of their excellence and call it Love. As love is a vital harmony in a disciplined will, so its object or goal (which is all good things) may be presented to the devout imagination by a single symbol—God, or the deified spirit of some friend of the human soul, become the guide of all aspiration. What renders this mysticism sound is the fact that it expresses a trained human nature. Platonism would be vapid indeed if it were not the poetry of moral experience. As such only I understand and accept it, not as a chimerical metaphysics: and it seems to me merely a heightening of normal human intelligence. Platonism is intuition quickened by love.

Even those sensations which convey the most urgent information are fictions in form: it is not this smoke nor this smell that is burning down the house. Sensible ideas are signals; they prompt our action far more clearly than they reveal their objects; and it is only by prompting us to study those objects further that they begin to reveal them with any degree of accuracy. The whole texture of experience is poetical: the colored and passionate language of sense is a primary literature. Like words, its units are not the units of nature (if nature has units); they are terms invented to abbreviate, cover, and convey their occasions, by rendering them on the human scale and in a manageable notation. A symbol is far better, both practically and poetically, than would be an exhaustive or photographic perusal of natural things in thought. It is enough for nature to exist once; thought supervenes to express the readiness of living souls to meet whole classes of events, taken loosely and on the scale of our bodies. As when I hear the name John, that brief sound, if I understand who John is, prepares me to face all the probable aspects and actions of that person, so every idea of sense or science is a summary sign, on a different plane and scale altogether from the diffuse material facts which it covers—one unexampled color for many rays, one indescribable note for many vibrations, one picture for many particles of paint, one word for a series of noises or letters. A word is a very Platonic thing: you can not say when it begins, when it ends, how long it lasts, or where it ever is; and yet it is the only unit you mean to utter, or normally hear. Platonism is the intuition of

essences in the presence of things, in order to describe them: it is mind itself.

A workman must not quarrel with his tools, nor the mind with ideas; and I have little patience with those philanthropists who hate everything human, and would reform away everything that men love or can love. Yet if we dwell too lovingly on the human quality and poetic play of ideas, we may forget that they are primarily signs. The practical intellect is always on the watch for ambient existences, in order to fight or to swallow them: and if by chance its attention is arrested at an idea, it will instinctively raise that idea to the throne of power which should be occupied only by the thing which it stands for and poetically describes. Ideas lend themselves to idolatry. There is a continual incidental deception into which we are betrayed by the fictitious and symbolical terms of our knowledge, in that we suppose these terms to form the whole essence of their objects. I think I have never failed to point out this danger of illusion, and to protest against idolatry in thought, so much more frequent and dangerous than the worship of stocks and stones: but at the same time, as such idolatry is almost inevitable, and as the fictions so deified often cover some true force or harmony in nature, I have sometimes been tempted in my heart to condone this illusion. In my youth it seemed as if a scientific philosophy was unattainable: human life, I thought, was at best a dream, and if we were not the dupes of one error, we should be the dupes of another: and whilst of course the critics must make this mental reservation in all his assents, it was perhaps too much to ask mankind to do so; so that in practise we were condemned to overlook the deceptiveness of fable, because there would be less beauty and no more truth in whatever theory might take its place. I think now that this despair of finding a scientific philosophy was premature, and that the near future may actually produce one: not that its terms will be less human and symbolical than those to which we are accustomed, but that they may hug more closely the true movement and the calculable order of nature. The truth, though it must be expressed in language, is not for that reason a form of error. No doubt the popularizers of science will turn its language into a revelation, and its images into idols: but the abstract character of these symbols will render it easier for the judicious to preserve the distinction between the things to be described and the science which describes them.

Was it, I wonder, this touch of sympathy with splendid error, bred in me by long familiarity with religion and philosophy, that offended my honest critics? Now that I show less sympathy with it, will they be better satisfied? I fear the opposite is the case.

What they resented was rather that in spite of all my sympathy, and all my despair about science, it never occurred to me to think those errors true because they were splendid—except true to the soul. Did they expect that I should seriously debate whether the Ghost in Hamlet really came out of Purgatorial fires, and whether Athena really descended in her chariot from Olympus and pulled Achilles by his yellow hair when he was in danger of doing something rash? Frankly, I have assumed—perhaps prematurely—that such questions are settled. I am not able nor willing to write a system of magic cosmology, nor to propose a new religion. I merely endeavor to interpret as sympathetically and imaginatively as I can, the religion and poetry already familiar to us: and I interpret them, of course, on their better side, not as childish science, but as subtle creations of hope, tenderness, and ignorance.

So anxious was I, when younger, to find some rational justification for poetry and religion, and to show that their magic was significant of true facts, that I insisted too much, as I now think, on the need of relevance to fact even in poetry. Not only did I distinguish good religion from bad by its expression of practical wisdom, and of the moral discipline that makes for happiness in this world, but I maintained that the noblest poetry also must express the moral burden of life and must be rich in wisdom. Age has made me less exacting, and I can now find quite sufficient perfection in poetry, like that of the Chinese and Arabians, without much philosophic scope, in mere grace and feeling and music and cloud-castles and frolic. I assumed formerly—being more abstractly psychological in method than I am now—that an idea could have depth and richness only if somehow redolent of former experiences of an overt kind. I had been taught to assign no substance to the mind, but to conceive it as a system of successive ideas, the later ones mingling with a survival of the earlier, and forming a cumulative experience, like a swelling musical movement. Now, without ceasing to conceive mental discourse in that way, I have learned, with the younger generation, to rely more on the substructure, on the material and psychical machinery that puts this conscious show on the stage, and pulls the wires. Not that I ever denied or really doubted that this substructure existed, but that I thought it a more prudent and critical method in philosophy not to assume it. Certainly it is a vast assumption: but I see now an irony in skepticism which I did not see when I was more fervid a skeptic: namely, that in addressing anybody, or even myself, I have already made that assumption: and that if I tried to rescind it, I should only be making another, no less gratuitous, and far more extravagant: I should be assuming that the

need of making this assumption was a fatal illusion, rather than a natural revelation of the existence of an environment to a living animal. This environment has been called the unknowable, the unconscious and the subconscious—egotistical and absurd names for it, as if its essence was the difficulty we have in approaching it. Its proper names are matter, substance, nature, or soul; and I hope people will learn again to call it by those old names. When living substance is thus restored beneath the surface of experience, there is no longer any reason for assuming that the first song of a bird may not be infinitely rich and as deep as heaven, if it utters the vital impulses of that moment with enough completeness. The analogies of this utterance with other events, or its outlying suggestions, whilst they may render it more intelligible to a third person, would not matter much to its inward force and intrinsic beauty. Its lyric adequacy, though of course not independent of nature, would be independent of wisdom. If besides being an adequate expression of the soul, the song expressed the lessons of a broad experience, which that soul had gathered and digested, this fact certainly would lend a great tragic sublimity to that song: but to be poetical or religious intrinsically, the mystic cry is enough.

I notice that men of the world, when they dip into my books, find them consistent, almost oppressively consistent, and to the ladies everything is crystal-clear; but the philosophers say that it is lazy and self-indulgent of me not to tell them plainly what I think, if I know myself what it is. Mr. Bertrand Russell once observed (probably in fun) that mine were the hardest books he had ever read: and Mr. G. E. Moore quite seriously avers that *The Life of Reason* is so confused as to be useless. Useless for what? Of course every possible view is played with there, fast and loose; but where is the imagination of a person who does not see that it is imagination I am speaking for? Because I describe madness sympathetically, because I lose myself in the dreaming mind, and see the world from that transcendental point of vantage, while at the same time interpreting that dream by its presumable motives and by its moral tendencies, these quick and intense reasoners suppose that I am vacillating in my own opinions. My own opinions are a minor matter, and there was no need, for the task in hand, that I should put them forward: yet as a matter of fact, since I reached the age of manhood, they have not changed. In my adolescence I thought this earthly life (not unintelligibly, considering what I had then seen and heard of it) a most hideous thing, and I was not disinclined to dismiss it as an illusion for which perhaps the Catholic epic might be substituted to advantage, as conforming better to the impulses of the soul;

and later I liked to regard all systems as alternative illusions for the solipsist; but neither solipsism nor Catholicism were ever anything to me but theoretic poses or possibilities; vistas for the imagination, never convictions. I was well aware, as I am still, that any such vista *may* be taken for true, because all dreams are persuasive while they last; and I have not lost, nor do I wish to lose, a certain facility and pleasure in taking those points of view at will, and speaking those philosophical languages. But though as a child I regretted the fact and now I hugely enjoy it, I have never been able to elude the recurring, invincible, and ironic conviction that whenever I or any other person feign to be living in any of those non-natural worlds, we are simply dreaming awake.

In general, I think my critics attribute to me more illusions than I have. My dogmatism may be a fault of temper or manner, because I dislike to stop to qualify or to explain everything: but in principle it is raised more diffidently and on a deeper skepticism than most of the systems which are called critical. My "essences," for instance, are blamed for being gratuitous inventions or needless abstractions. But essences appear precisely when all inventions are rescinded and the irreducible manifest datum is disclosed. I do not ask anyone to *believe* in essences. I ask them to reject every belief, and what they will have on their hands, if they do so, will be some essence. And if, believing nothing, they could infinitely enlarge their imagination, the whole realm of essence would loom before them. This realm is no discovery of mine: it has been described, for instance, by Leibniz in two different ways; once as the collection of all possible worlds, and again as the abyss of non-existence, *le néant*, of which he says: "The non-existent . . . is infinite, it is eternal, it has a great many of the attributes of God; it contains an infinity of things, since all those things which do not exist at all are included in the non-existent, and those which no longer exist have returned to the non-existent." It suffices, therefore, to deny a thing for us to recognize an essence, if we know at all what we are denying. And the essence before us, whether we assert or deny its existence, is certainly no abstraction; for there is no other datum, more individual or more obvious, from which the abstraction could be drawn. The difficulty in discerning essences is simply the very real difficulty which the practical intellect has in abstaining from belief, and from everywhere thinking it finds much more than is actually given.

Profound skepticism is favorable to conventions, because it doubts that the criticism of conventions is any truer than they are. Fervent believers look for some system of philosophy or religion that shall be *literally* true and worthy of superseding the current assumptions.

of daily life. I look for no such thing. Never for a moment can I bring myself to regard a human system—a piece of mental discourse—as more than a system of notation, sometimes picturesque, sometimes abstract and mathematical. Scientific symbols, terms in which calculation is possible, may replace poetic symbols, which merely catch echoes of the senses or make up dramatic units out of appearances in the gross. But the most accurate scientific system would still be only a method of description, and the actual facts would continue to rejoice in their own ways of being. The relevance and truth of science, like the relevance and truth of sense, are pragmatic, in that they mark the actual relations, march and distribution of events, in the terms in which they enter our experience.

In moral philosophy (which is my chosen subject) I find my unsophisticated readers, as I found my pupils formerly, delightfully appreciative, warmly sympathetic, and altogether friends of mine in the spirit. It is a joy, like that of true conversation, to find that we can look and laugh and cry at the world so unfeignedly together. But the other philosophers, and those whose religion is of the anxious and intolerant sort, are not at all pleased. They find my morality very loose: I am a friend of publicans and sinners, not (as they are) in zeal to reform them, but because I like them as they are; and indeed I am a pagan and a moral skeptic in my naturalism. On the other hand (and this seems a contradiction to them) my moral philosophy looks strangely negative and narrow; a philosophy of abstention and distaste for life. What a horrible combination, they say to themselves, of moral license with moral poverty! They do not see that it is because I love life that I wish to keep it sweet, so as to be able to love it altogether: and that all I wish for others, or dare to recommend to them, is that they should keep their lives sweet also, not after my fashion, but each man in his own way. I talk a great deal about the good and the ideal, having learned from Plato and Aristotle—(the living have never shown me how to live)—that, granting a human nature to which to appeal, the good and the ideal may be defined pretty accurately. Of course, they can not be defined immutably, because human nature is not immutable; and they can not be defined in such a way as to be transferred without change from one race or person to another, because human nature is various. Yet any reflective and honest man, in expressing his hopes and preferences, may expect to find many of his neighbors agreeing with him, and when they agree they may work politically together. Now I find that I am sometimes blamed for not laboring more earnestly to bring down the ideal good of which I prate into the lives of other men. My critics suppose, apparently, that I mean by the ideal good

some particular way of life or some type of character which is alone virtuous, and which ought to be propagated. Alas, their propagandas! How they have filled this world with hatred, darkness, and blood! How they are still the eternal obstacle, in every home and in every heart, to a simple happiness! I have no wish to propagate any particular character, least of all my own; my conceit does not take that form. I wish individuals, and races, and nations to be themselves, and to multiply the forms of perfection and happiness, as nature prompts them. The only thing which I think might be propagated without injustice to the types thereby suppressed is harmony; enough harmony to prevent the interference of one type with another, and to allow the perfect development of each type. The good, as I conceive it, is happiness, happiness for each man after his own heart, and for each hour according to its inspiration. I should dread to transplant my happiness into other people; it might die in that soil; and my critics are the first to tell me that my sort of happiness is a poor thing in their estimation. Well and good. Let them take their own course: but how should I be able to speed them on it against my judgment? They do not place their happiness in the things I have, or can give. My theory of the ideal, and my experience of it, assure me that it is an adventitious denomination and a moral category. Anything is an ideal, whether existent or non-existent, if it fulfills the demands of some living being. Let, then, every soul consider what it requires and in what things it might find an unpoisoned happiness. No man can set up an ideal for another, nor labor to realize it for him, save by his leave or as his spokesman, perhaps more ready with the right word. To find the comparatively right word, my critics seem to agree, is my art. Do I not practise it for their benefit as best I can? Should I leave writing, and go and dig? Is it I who am indifferent to the being of light? Who loves it more, or basks in it more joyfully? And do I do nothing that the light may come? Is it I who tremble lest at its coming it should dissolve the creatures begotten in darkness? Ah, I know why my critics murmur and are dissatisfied. I have no earnestness. I do not endeavor to deceive myself, nor to deceive them, nor to aid them in deceiving themselves. They will never prevail on me to do that. I am a disciple of Socrates.

GEORGE SANTAYANA.

A DISCUSSION OF "MIND DISCERNED"

AFTER reading Professor Woodbridge's interesting account¹ of the basis of interpretation by a determinate mind of the total universe of discourse, I find in myself the same attitude to-

¹ This JOURNAL, Vol. XVIII, No. 13, pp. 337-347.